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AUTHOR Sturman, Andrew
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ABSTRACT

This discussion paper examines the schooling, and in particular the post-secondary educational performance and transition to work, of the ethnic minority communities in Australia. The first section gives a background on immigrants, education, and equity. Section 2 discusses patterns of immigration to Australia and the overall usefulness of research in this area. The next three sections discuss how immigrant groups approach schooling or post-secondary education, how schools or post-secondary institutions respond to immigrant groups, and how well immigrant groups achieve in the education they receive. In the context of the first topic, educational aspirations, motivations, and attitudes are considered and the relationship between multiculturalism and educational disadvantage is examined. The paper considers possible contributions that the education system can make to fostering social or cultural inequalities and examines the link between schooling, post-school opportunities, and aspects of curriculum structure and content. The final topic considers the distinction between educational attainment or retentivity and educational performance. A separate section is devoted to the issue of the transition to work, with consideration of how immigrant Australians approach this transition and how well their educational attainments translate into vocational outcomes. (CG)

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NACCME

National Advisory and Co-ordinating Committee on Multicultural Education

IMMIGRANT AUSTRALIANS, EDUCATION AND THE TRANSITION TO WORK

DISCUSSION PAPER No. 3

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IMMIGRANT AUSTRALIANS, EDUCATION AND THE TRANSITION TO WORK

Prepared by Andrew Sturman, Australian Council for Educational Research, March, 1985 for the National Advisory and Co-ordinating Committee on Multicultural Education

PREFACE

The National Advisory and Co-ordinating Committee on Multicultural Education (NACCME) was established in 1984 to provide the Commonwealth Government with policy advice on multicultural education which refers broadly to educational policies and practices in and for a multicultural society. It endeavours to maintain a natural perspective across the full educational spectrum by monitoring and co-ordinating development in multicultural education.

As one of its first tasks, NACCME has identified several areas of multicultural education, such as the educational needs of ethnic minorities and the rationale of multicultural education and intercultural understanding, a national perspective as being in need of review and assessment. To this end, NACCME has commissioned scholars and educationalists with special expertise in each of these areas to produce papers which examine critically relevant issues, identify needs and, where possible, to propose strategies for future action. Two of these papers, one by Dr Andrew Jakubowicz and the other by Dr Barbara Falk, have been released recently. The Paper by Dr Andrew Jakubowicz, entitled *Education and Ethnic Minorities: Issues of Participation and Equity*, was focussed specifically on the educational implications of a commitment to migrant and multicultural education over the past few decades, whilst Discussion Paper No 2, by Dr Barbara Falk, entitled *Slogans, Policies and Practice in Multicultural Education in Australia*, examined issues relating to the rationale for policies and practices in multicultural education in Australia.

NACCME is pleased to release Discussion Paper No 3, prepared by Mr Andrew Sturman of the ACER, which, like Discussion Paper 1, relates to the key issues of participation and equity. This Paper, entitled *Immigration, Education and the Transition to Work*, examines in particular the post secondary educational performance and outcomes of the ethnic minority communities. It is based on a more extensive research report to be published by ACER shortly.

It is hoped that, as a result of a considered and critical examination of the issues raised in this and other Discussion Papers, NACCME will be in a better position to formulate and recommend to Government relevant and desirable changes.

NACCME, therefore, invites public comment and reactions to Mr Sturman's Paper. To assist individuals who wish to comment, we have listed key questions and issues, as well as policy options, which we would like to be considered by respondents. The public will also be given an opportunity to comment more informally through a series of consultations NACCME hopes to conduct in the States/Territories.

All written comments should be forwarded to The Executive Officer, NACCME, PO Box 826, Woden, ACT, 2606.

NACCME hopes that with the release of this Discussion Paper it will, among other things, be able to act as a catalyst in developing an interest in multicultural education among educationists and the public at large.

Laksiri Jayasuriya
Chairperson
NACCME

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

At the invitation of the National Advisory and Co-ordinating Committee on Multicultural Education, a body established by the Commonwealth Government and responsible to the Minister of Education, I prepared, during the second half of 1984, a review of research into issues associated with the schooling, post-secondary education and transition to work of immigrants.

This paper for the Committee attempts to integrate and summarise the findings of research concerning these issues. A more lengthy review of the research in this area will shortly be published by the Australian Council for Educational Research. This present paper, then, is best viewed as a summary of the longer Australian Council for Educational Research report which should be consulted for more detailed and specific comments upon individual research projects in this area.

I would like to acknowledge the support given to me by the Committee, in particular the Chairperson, Professor Laksiri Jayasuriya, and members of the Committee's Participation and Equity Program Task Group which comprised Jim Giles, Joe Lo Bianco and Henk Overberg. However, it must be stressed that the views expressed in this paper are mine alone and not necessarily those of Committee members. I would also like to thank ACER for providing me the time to undertake this project and thereby delaying my previous commitments.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Immigrant Australians, Education and Equity

It is to be expected that the great majority of new settlers in Australia would be optimistic that they could build for themselves or for their children a more satisfactory life-style than that which they had experienced in their homelands. Not surprisingly, then, it is to be expected that educational opportunities would be seen as especially important to immigrants. Participation in compulsory and post-secondary education, as well as satisfactory completion of the studies involved, would be seen as means for economic, and possibly social, advancement.

It is no less true that immigrants to Australia should have these expectations than it is true that educators in Australia should accept the validity of these hopes and aspirations. As well as being an institution designed to foster individuality and citizenship, the Australian education system is encouraged to foster equal opportunities between individuals and groups.

Although the pursuit of equality is an acknowledged goal of the Australian educational system, it has become increasingly accepted that not all groups in society get the same benefit from the education they are given. For example, it has been argued that immigrant Australian students from non-English speaking backgrounds are one such disadvantaged group (Australia. Schools Commission, 1975b; Fitzgerald, 1976).

This paper addresses the issue of educational disadvantage with respect to immigrant groups and asks the question: is there any evidence that immigrant Australians are disadvantaged in their educational experiences compared with other Australians?

Before reviewing the research evidence, however, it is essential to discuss some of the key theoretical issues and terms used in this paper. How, for example, should educational disadvantage be measured and how does it relate to issues of participation, equity and equality in education? Where within this debate does the issue of multiculturalism or cultural pluralism reside? What are meant in this paper by the terms ethnic groups and immigrant groups?

1.2 Towards a Measure of Educational Disadvantage

This paper attempts to draw together elements from the debates concerning equality and equity in education, both in Australia and overseas, in order to develop a concept of educational disadvantage.

The debate on the issues of equity in education and equal opportunities for education would appear to have moved through three distinct phases in Australia. First, during the early periods of public education and up to the 1950s, it was argued that centralisation, uniformity, standardisation and conformity were major characteristics of education in all States (Butts, 1955). In defending these policies, however, it would often be argued that educational provision was equitable. Equity was defined as uniform access to educational facilities.

As it became clear that such conformity and uniformity constrained educational innovation and did not produce any noticeable equality of educational outcomes, changes occurred. There was a move towards individualised education, and with respect to equity between groups, it was accepted that equality of educational opportunity would require more than the provision of uniform, standardised educational facilities. The notion of equity in this second phase was still seen in terms of *access* to opportunities, but it was accepted that different groups have different constraints upon them and are therefore in need of special assistance.

The most recent phase in this debate is characterised by the view, often expounded in Schools Commission reports, that equality of opportunity should be viewed in terms of both access to and attainment of opportunities. For example, one of the most recent Commonwealth Government statements concerned with equity was made by the Minister for Education and Youth Affairs in tabling the 1984 Commonwealth Schools Commission Report on Participation and Equity in Australian Schools. The principle of equity, according to this statement, requires that schools and systems will treat all children fairly and, as far as practicable, will avoid policies and practices which advantage some social groups and disadvantage others. The notion of equity being advanced by the Schools Commission in this report was not that every group or individual should be treated in the same way, but rather that less advantaged groups in the community should receive a fair share of the range of benefits education brings (Australia. Schools Commission, 1984:vii). It was noted, in particular, that the position of women and girls and other under-represented groups, such as Aboriginals and some ethnic groups, should be given particular attention. As a concrete manifestation of these objectives, the Commission stressed that the goals of its Participation and Equity Program were to reduce significantly the number of students leaving full-time education prematurely and to foster more equal educational outcomes.

Two elements, therefore, can be discerned in this statement concerning equity:

- stress is placed upon the relative positions of different groups in society as opposed to individuals
- benefits from education are perceived to include participation rates and equal outcomes (that is access and outcomes of opportunities)

In the American setting, Burbules, Lord and Sherman (1982) have also discussed these phases. The first they have called 'formalism' and this is distinguished from the second phase which they called 'actualism'. They have argued that under a formalist view, opportunities should be equal; that is, the same for all. So long as conditions of access are relevant and identical then opportunities are equal regardless of criteria of access. This view is characterised by meritocratic standards of relevance and faith in the ability of persons to make their own way. Actualism, however, is more concerned with the barriers that restrict access, and consequently this approach takes account of the ways people differ and the availability of compensatory alternatives. Greater emphasis is placed on a fairness component of equity. Within the concept of actualism, Burbules et al. distinguished compensatory actualism, which is concerned with the degree to which opportunities do or do not exist, from alternative actualism, which is not concerned so much with the provision of different rates of access to a common goal but with the provision of alternative routes of access to different goals which are seen as equivalent by some standard of judgment. This alternative

actualism places even greater emphasis on the fairness principle, and is appropriate where not everyone might have the same skills and thus compensatory education would be unsuitable.

Burbules et al. have noted that in America, as in Australia, some writers have taken an even stronger view than the proponents of formalism and actualism and have argued that opportunities are equal only when outcomes are equal. Within this extended interpretation of equal opportunity which characterises the third stage of debate, Burbules et al. discussed four approaches:

- equal opportunities should be judged by equal results
- equal opportunities should be judged by equal progress from different starting points
- equal opportunities should be judged by the achievement of minimum standards
- equal opportunities should be judged according to the relative performance of different groups in society; that is, equal opportunities exist only when the proportionate representation of each significant group is constant through every achievement or outcome level

It would seem that this fourth approach to the extended conceptualisation of equal opportunity is present in the Schools Commission Report on Participation and Equity in Australian Schools. However, Burbules et al. have cautioned that although this extended conceptualisation may represent desirable social goals it does not represent a logical interpretation of equal opportunities.

The examination of issues of equity by Burbules et al., and in particular their discussions of the concepts 'equal' and 'opportunity' in 'equal opportunity', provide guidelines for a conceptualisation of educational disadvantage. The authors made a distinction between *equality in* education and *equal opportunities for* education: the former emphasises equal outcomes and the latter self-determination. Also, opportunities were distinguished from choices or likelihoods and defined more as 'chances'. That is, an opportunity is a chance to do something. Chance is affected by having access to an activity (external factors), as well as personal factors such as motivation. However, the personal factors were not seen by the authors as relevant to the definition of opportunity; they argued that it must be possible to have an opportunity without taking advantage of it. Similarly, an opportunity could not be said to exist when there were constraints on a person's ability to decide (such as lack of information, or pressure). The authors argued that providing an opportunity to someone who does not have one may entail changing the conditions of access or supplementing the person's criteria of access.

There are a number of implications from the preceding discussion for an examination of the educational experiences of immigrant groups. First, the concept of equal opportunity should be distinguished from equal outcomes. This does not deny the usefulness of investigating both concepts within a consideration of disadvantage, but it stresses the theoretical distinction between the two. Among the outcome measures which could be considered would be:

- educational retentivity or participation
- educational performance
- vocational attainment

In defining these three measures as outcomes it must also be acknowledged that educational retentivity or performance could also be viewed as access

variables, that is they provide access or opportunities for future experiences.

Second, within the consideration of equal opportunities it is essential to examine both access to opportunities, and constraints upon that access. The constraints could emerge both from external factors and internal factors. Among issues of access which would be important, then, are:

- the range or quantity of institutions or jobs available
- the range and quantity of courses taught
- entrance qualifications
- financial requirements of post-school study
- the knowledge that students have about educational or vocational opportunities
- the willingness of students to study or live away from home, and
- the aspirations, motivations and other attitudes that guide students' or parents' behaviour.

Although the relevance of this list to access to post-secondary education is clear it should also be noted that there are issues of access within the periods of compulsory schooling. Are different student groups channelled into different courses or streams? Do the educational experiences of different groups determine their decisions to leave school early?

Although a number of the factors affecting access to opportunities are determined by national and State educational or economic policies, and others by institutional policies, it would be expected that some would be related to the cultural background of families. For example, different immigrant groups may have different attitudes (aspirations, motivations, etc.) towards education.

Thus, the debate concerning equity and equal opportunity draws attention to the need to view disadvantage as a multi-faceted concept. Relevant issues are those of access to opportunities, including external and internal constraints upon access, and issues related to outcomes from education.

1.3 Multiculturalism and Educational Disadvantage

Bullivant (1981) contended that in all countries where substantial immigration has occurred there have been, and continue to be, discussions and arguments about the nature of the society and how best to reconcile the legitimate claims of the nation-state with those of citizens from different social, economic and cultural backgrounds. He referred to this as the pluralist dilemma. Bullivant further argued that a major part of the debate focussed on education, as this institution is partly responsible for inculcating citizenship as well as individuality, which, in a multicultural society, can potentially be problematic.

Martin (1978) analysed the official responses to the migrant presence between the years of 1947 and 1977. She argued that up to the early 1960s immigrants to Australia were seen as 'assimilable' and this assimilation was considered possible without undue strain on themselves or undue change on the part of the Australian community. From the late 1960s and up to the early 1970s, there was increasing awareness of the fact that immigrant Australians faced problems in Australian society, but these problems were seen mostly as arising from some inadequacy or unsuitability within the immigrant groups themselves. From the mid-1970s,

Martin argued that immigrant Australians emerged as a minority pressure group with rights to power and participation. Martin contended that the first two stages emphasised the transient, marginal status of newcomers as immigrants, whereas the third stage conceived of culturally diverse groups as established, legitimate structures within Australian society. The term 'ethnic' replaced the more transitory term 'migrant'. It was during this stage that the concepts of Australia as a multicultural society, and of cultural pluralism, came into prominence as an opposing view to that of assimilation into an Anglo-Celtic society.

Martin also described how these general ideological changes were reflected by educational responses. She argued that during the assimilationist phase it was assumed that immigrant groups would themselves adapt to the educational demands placed upon them, and consequently no specific action was forthcoming. Later, during the 'problem' phase the Federal Government introduced the Child Migrant Education Program which focussed on the teaching of English as a second language. During the present phase, which Martin describes as 'participatory', policies developed at Federal and State levels to further multicultural ideals. Schools Commission initiatives have included:

- developing policies with the assistance and involvement of ethnic communities
- supporting the teaching of community languages
- supporting ethnic schools
- supporting other multicultural initiatives at the school level

During this final phase, however, there was continued support for the English as a Second Language program of the Schools Commission with an extension to involve special programs for new arrivals.

Ideological standpoints and policy initiatives have changed over time. However, within these developments there have also been certain conflicts. Although the Australian Ethnic Affairs Council felt able to comment in 1975 that equality depended on and strengthened multiculturalism, and that multiculturalism depended on and strengthened equality, Bullivant (1981) described later concerns that the promotion of flourishing ethnic communities might interfere with the political goal of equality. Bullivant further argued that there was a possible contradiction between the concepts of cultural pluralism and social cohesion.

With respect to policy initiatives, it is notable that the Schools Commission Report for the Triennium 1979-1981 (Australia. Schools Commission, 1978) was also forced to admit that confusion existed about the ramifications of accepting a multicultural philosophy and about what the legitimate claims against Commission funds were. Although endorsing the multicultural philosophy, the Schools Commission argued that its most urgent obligation was to students whose first language was not English and that:

> . . the Commonwealth cannot reasonably be expected directly to meet the full costs of general curriculum changes. (Australia. Schools Commission, 1978:105)

Given these policy changes and the conflicts outlined, just how is the pluralist dilemma being resolved in Australia? In the early 1970s, Smolicz and Wiseman (1971b) argued that among the various factors within the educational system that handicap immigrant groups, insufficient attention has been given to the tension which may arise in the home as a result of the confrontation of the

ethnic culture of the parents with the culture inculcated by the school, whether through the formal process of education or informally through interaction between the child and his Australian peers. Similarly, the Australian Commission of Inquiry into Poverty (Fitzgerald, 1976) has argued that the most important factor in restricting the life chances of immigrant groups is the way in which the institutions and structures of Australian society have responded to the presence of non-English speaking minorities. The Commission referred to what Martin (1971) called 'devaluation' to describe a process whereby, instead of accommodating immigrant groups by giving their languages and cultures respect and recognition, official consensus in Australia has been to ignore as much as possible the distinctiveness of minority groups. Smolicz and Wiseman (1971b) saw the process of devaluation as basically a policy of 'indifferentism', a lack of interest in or recognition of different cultures.

To a great extent, the issue at stake here relates to the control over the definition, distribution and evaluation of knowledge. Dominant groups which control these processes are in particularly strong positions to negate sources of legitimation proposed by assertive groups. The tension between the assertive and dominant groups is, according to Martin, basically an ideological tension:

> ...the dominance of some parties implies their capacity to define interests and identities, to monopolize access to knowledge and its construction and to assert that certain knowledge is valid, irrespective of whether it has been validated in the way claimed, or not. To the extent that certain parties dominate the construction of knowledge to the exclusion of others, the knowledge so produced is ideological. (Martin, 1978:22)

However, the link between multiculturalism and educational disadvantage is not as simple as estimating the extent to which the dominant ideology may still represent an Anglo-Celtic tradition but it must also involve an estimation of the needs that different ethnic groups perceive concerning their cultural traditions. Smolicz (1981a) suggested that an examination of 'ethnic tenacity' and core cultural values can help in understanding this process. The concept 'ethnic tenacity' refers to the degree to which different immigrant groups may wish to retain their ethnicity. Smolicz argued that different groups may hold different core cultural values as being important in maintaining their cultural traditions. Language and religion were provided as examples. It was argued that where core values are not being maintained there is a danger that ethnic cultures can be reduced to residuals.

There can be no denying that the issue of multiculturalism and how it relates to education has not been ignored in policy statements. The Schools Commission Report for the Triennium 1982-84 has argued, for example, that without acceptance and valuing of cultural diversity by majority as well as minority groups there can be little hope of progress towards the adoption of the concept of multiculturalism (Australia. Schools Commission, 1981:15). More recently, the Schools Commission has argued that the concept of participation should be viewed as relevant to these issues:

> Participation has much to do with the quality of the relationship between students, their parents and schools; the extent to which they share access to all the school or the system has to offer; and the degree to which the school curriculum, organisation and climate for learning accords with their experiences, values, interests and aspirations. (Australia. Schools Commission, 1984:12)

However the key issue becomes how this rhetoric is applied to the educational experiences of students.

In reviewing research about the concept of educational disadvantage, consideration of the attitudes of immigrant Australians to education, their perceived needs and the educational responses, (where evidence is available), are essential components.

It should be acknowledged that this paper does not consider all possible interpretations of disadvantage. For example, one aspect of importance to immigrant groups might relate to a comparison of their circumstances in their new homeland, Australia, with their old homeland. It may be that some individuals who seem disadvantaged in Australian society consider themselves much better off here compared with their early experiences. Of course, the opposite might also be the case. Although this may be a valid theoretical interpretation of disadvantage—and with respect to issues of cultural maintenance such a comparison is necessary—in considering the outcomes from education there is a risk that inequalities will be accepted in Australia because immigrant groups have improved their conditions. It might therefore produce what could be called the apartheid defense, which draws attention away from producing a more equitable internal environment.

1.4 The Concept of Ethnicity

Martin (1978) distinguished between the terms 'migrant' and 'ethnic', and has defined the latter in the following manner:

> While a good case can be made for saying that all of us—Aborigines and whites, old and new—are ethnics (as ultimately we are all of migrant origin), I find it more useful to reserve the term 'ethnic' for groups and cultures of non-Anglo-Saxon background. By coupling 'ethnic' with 'minority', I try to convey the social and cultural distance between the majority, culturally dominant groups of Anglo-Saxon origin and the other groups. Aborigines are clearly an ethnic minority in these terms, but I trust that the context will ensure that 'ethnic minorities' are here understood to include only people of recent migrant origin (that is, immigrants and their Australian-born children). (Martin, 1978:16)

Martin noted that the term 'migrant', although also used in countless different ways, does have legal status. She defined migrants as residents who, by virtue of their not being Australian citizens by either birth or descent, belong to a category of persons whom the state can control, direct or provide for (to their advantage or disadvantage) in some specific way.

Of course, the definition of 'ethnic' or 'migrant' which may have been used at different times reflects the issues that the particular writer is addressing. Those concerned with the legal system necessarily cannot avoid a discussion of legal definitions, whereas the sociologist concerned with the distribution of power, control or influence in society is likely to be interested in 'minority' or 'majority' definitions. Other writers may be more interested in the perceptions of respondents concerning their own status, so a distinction between the birthplace of the child and the birthplace of his or her parents may be critical to such writers. Does a child born in Australia of foreign parents have similar attitudes to a child born overseas of foreign parents? The distinction between first and second generation migrants becomes relevant to this perspective. It is possible that yet

other writers may be interested in the cultural or linguistic environment of the families, and these writers would therefore be concerned with the country of origin of the parents or the language spoken in the home.

Research into the educational or vocational experiences of immigrant Australians has used a variety of definitions. Generally, these relate to the birthplace of the parents or the students; occasionally they relate to language used in the home; less often definitions have taken account of the legal status of immigrant Australians or their status with respect to control or influence in society.

For the research reviewer, therefore, there can be no one answer to the question of how to define 'ethnicity'; the reviewer has no choice but to accept the definitions used in the original research. In so doing it is essential to understand the implications that the definitions have for the research findings. Although the literature includes a great variety of definitions relating to immigrant Australians, such as 'new Australians', 'minority groups', 'new settlers' and even the abbreviations NESB (non-English speaking background) and ESB (English speaking background), in the sections that follow the terms 'immigrant Australians' or 'immigrant groups' have been used to embrace the various terms used by different researchers. These two terms are not used in any legalistic sense; it is acknowledged that immigrants in the original research might have differing legal status. Where the term 'ethnic group' is used in the review, it is used in the manner Martin defined, that is, to include only people of non-Anglo-Saxon background. In addition, in the sections that follow the term 'Australian' has been used; once again this term is not used in a legalistic sense but is meant to include those children or adults born in Australia of Australian-born parents.

Martin (1978) preferred not to include Aborigines in her definition of ethnic minorities, using the term to embrace only people of non-Anglo-Saxon origin. There is much sense in this approach, for although there may be some similarities between the situation of Aborigines and that of ethnic groups due to their being members of minority cultures which, it is argued, are widely 'devalued' by mainstream society (see Martin, 1971; Australia. Schools Commission, 1975b) there are differences, and Aboriginal people feel that their problems are not identical to those of immigrants. For these reasons Aborigines have been excluded from this summary of research findings.

1.5 Structure of the Review

It has already been noted that at a general level this paper will examine the question of whether immigrant Australians are disadvantaged in the educational experiences they receive. The review is concerned with both the periods of compulsory schooling and with post-secondary education. In addition, it considers transition to work as one important outcome related to educational experiences.

With respect to education, the review seeks to answer three separate but related questions:

- how do immigrant groups approach schooling or post-secondary education?
- how do schools or post-secondary institutions respond to immigrant groups?
- how well do immigrant groups achieve in the education they receive?

These questions are asked with respect to the experiences of both 'Australians' and various immigrant groups. Sections 3, 4 and 5 discuss these questions in

connection with primary and secondary schooling; Section 6 focuses them in the context of post-secondary education.

The first question, 'how do immigrant groups approach schooling or post-secondary education', relates to such aspects as educational aspirations, motivations and attitudes. It is in the context of the discussion of attitudes that the relation between multiculturalism and educational disadvantage is examined. At the post-secondary level, the knowledge that students have concerning opportunities available to them is an important aspect of their approach to education. In effect, the discussion of this first question focuses on characteristics of individuals or of family relationships and on how these can contribute towards inequalities or disadvantage (Connell, Ashenden, Kessler and Dowsett, 1982).

The second of these questions, 'how do schools or post-secondary institutions respond to immigrant groups', relates to the possible contribution that the education system can make to reproducing social or cultural inequalities (Connell et al., 1982). Specifically, it examines the link between schooling, post-school opportunities and aspects of curriculum structure and content, such as classroom interaction and teacher expectations. In this section the school's ethnic policies are relevant too. In effect, the question focuses upon issues of access to opportunities either at schooling or at post-secondary level. Consequently, at post-secondary level it is concerned with the availability of institutions and courses and with the financial constraints operating upon individuals.

The final question, 'how well do immigrant Australians achieve in education', is concerned more with outcomes than processes. A distinction is made in the various sections dealing with this question between educational attainment or retentivity and educational performance.

Although it might have been possible to consider the transition to work in the context of outcomes discussed above, a separate section is devoted to this issue (Section 7). In effect, this Section focuses upon the relationship between educational achievement and vocational attainment. Two general areas are discussed: how immigrant Australians approach the transition to work and how well their educational attainments translate into vocational outcomes.

Before considering these three general questions, the following section discusses the patterns of immigration to Australia, the overall usefulness of research, its weaknesses and emphases in the issues relevant to this paper.

Section 8, the final section, attempts to integrate the findings of the research in the context of its weaknesses and strengths.

2 PATTERNS OF IMMIGRATION AND THE RESEARCH RESPONSE

2.1 Patterns of Immigration to Australia

Price (1983) has provided figures on the ethnic origins and birthplaces of the Australian population in 1978. (Table 2.1.) It can be seen that almost half of those members of the Australian population who were born, or had parents born overseas, had ethnic origins in the United Kingdom or Eire. Other immigrant groups which represented sizeable minorities in this population included those born, or with parents born in Italy (11 per cent), Eastern Europe (11 per cent), Northern Europe (10 per cent), and Greece (7 per cent).

Table 2.1 **Australian Population by Birthplace and Ethnic Origin (1987): First and Second Generation**

Origin	1st Generation (foreign-born) %	2nd Generation (foreign-born parents) %	Ethnic Origin of Is, IIs %
UK and Eire	40.0	47.9	46.4
Northern Europe	9.9	10.6	10.4
Eastern Europe	11.0	8.2	10.5
Italy	10.2	12.2	11.1
Greece	5.5	6.2	6.6
Other Southern Europe	1.9	3.8	3.1
Middle East	4.1	2.6	2.9
Asia	6.3	2.9	2.4
Africa	1.6	0.7	0.8
Americas	3.0	1.4	2.3
Pacific	0.8	0.5	0.1
New Zealand	3.7	3.0	3.4
Total Foreign Born	2 807 000	1 996 000	4 803 000
Australian-born of Australian-born parents			9 471 000
Total population			14 274 000

Source: Based on Price, 1983:18-19.

Note: 1st generation here means persons born abroad, except persons born abroad of Australian-born parents. 2nd generation here means Australian-born persons of foreign-born parents, the paternal and maternal lines being averaged.

Although the ethnic origins of the Australian population were predominantly drawn from a fairly homogeneous group, there has been a varied pattern of immigration between the years 1947-80. (Table 2.2.) In the years 1947-51 the dominant donor migrant countries were the United Kingdom and Eire and eastern Europe; 1951-61, the United Kingdom and Eire, northern Europe and Italy; 1961-66, the United Kingdom and Eire and to a lesser extent Greece; 1966-71 the United Kingdom and Eire and to a much lesser extent eastern Europe; 1971-76 they were again the United Kingdom and Eire, and to lesser extents Asia, America and Oceania; 1976-80 Oceania, Asia, and the United Kingdom and Eire. It was only during this latter period that United Kingdom and Eire immigrants were not the dominant group.

Table 2.2 **Net Immigration by Origin: Australia 1947 to 1980[a]**

Origin[b]	1947-51 %	1951-61 %	1961-66 %	1966-71 %	1971-76 %	1976-80 %	1947-80 %
UK and Eire	36.1	28.9	49.5	43.3	40.3	19.9	36.5
Northern Europe	6.5	23.6	0.8	4.9	-	-0.4	8.9
Eastern Europe	38.2	8.5	6.5	13.3	5.1	6.1	13.3
Italy	7.2	20.5	9.4	5.0	-1.6	0.2	9.3
Greece	1.6	8.5	13.9	4.2	-1.5	-1.9	5.4
Other Southern Europe	2.3	4.4	6.1	2.1	5.2	1.2	3.8
Middle East	0.4	1.0	1.2	4.5	7.9	7.6	3.0
Asia	3.8	1.7	4.1	7.1	19.3	26.6	7.6
Africa	0.5	0.5	3.1	3.8	4.9	4.7	2.4
Americas	0.8	0.8	2.5	4.8	9.5	5.4	3.2
Pacific	0.2	0.4	0.9	1.0	4.3	3.5	1.3
New Zealand	1.4	1.2	2.0	6.0	6.6	27.1	5.3
Total Net Immigration	464 000	833 000	456 000	600 000	284 000	280 000	2 917 000

Source: Based on Price 1981:pp.10-11

Notes: a Some percentages are based on estimates. b 1947-1961=Nationality; 1961-1980=Birthplace.

More recent estimates of immigration patterns, based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics demographic data for the December 1983 quarter, indicate that the dominant donor migrant countries for the years 1982 and 1983 were the United Kingdom, New Zealand, and Vietnam. For the year ending 30 June 1982, the United Kingdom contributed 31 per cent of settler arrivals, New Zealand 10 per cent and Vietnam 9 per cent. For the year ending 30 June 1983, the respective percentages were 28, 7 and 9. From 1982 to 1983 there were also a substantial increase in the number of immigrants from Kampuchea and a less substantial increase in the number of immigrants from Germany, despite an overall decrease in the number of settler arrivals.

Such a pattern of immigration has drawn to Australia a great cultural as well as social mix. To take just one cultural facet, language, the Victorian Ethnic Affairs Commission (1984a) has estimated that 15 per cent of the Australian population aged 15 years or more (or 1.7 million people) have a language other than English as a first language.

2.2 Research and Ethnicity

At a general level, although many studies have touched upon issues of relevance to the educational or vocational experiences of immigrant groups, there have been very few sophisticated studies have focused specifically upon these groups. Another major problem with the research is that there is rarely a distinction made in studies between first and second generation immigrant Australians. Although it would not be unreasonable to assume that the attainments of immigrant Australians whose first educational or vocational experiences occurred outside of Australia might be different from those who have received all their education in this country, most research has failed to make this distinction. This is a particular problem in attempting to assess information concerning vocational attainment. It would be true to say that research has not kept pace with the changing patterns of immigration and settlement described earlier partly as a result of the failure to distinguish new settlers from other immigrants.

The effects of these problems are that the complex interaction of factors that may affect the present experiences of immigrant groups has not always been analysed and, as immigrant groups have not usually been specially sampled, research has generally aggregated different immigrant groups. The usual grouping has resulted in a distinction between immigrant Australians from non-English speaking backgrounds, immigrant Australians from English speaking backgrounds, and 'Australians' as used in Section 1.4. Although research has not always been consistent with the definitions involved (a student's birthplace, a father's or mother's birthplace, or even language spoken in the home may be used instead of actual birthplace), the three-fold distinction appeared to be meaningful—those with English speaking backgrounds were generally far more like 'Australians' in aspects examined in this review than were those from non-English speaking backgrounds. On the other hand, it was not uncommon to find that there were significant differences between members of countries classified as non-English speaking and quite often these differences were as great as, if not greater than, differences which existed across the broader classifications. In fact, these variations can be so great that it is questionable whether such a broad classification is useful.

A further weakness of much of the research relates to the methodological design of the original studies. Ideally, in a study examining factors that affect students' transition from school, a longitudinal design is most appropriate. However, such studies are complex and time-consuming. As a result, few research studies have used longitudinal designs; most have been cross-sectional. The value of cross-sectional studies depends upon the extent to which they can unravel the complexity of factors influencing student experiences; that is, their multivariate nature. Not all the studies reviewed have employed adequate multivariate techniques and consequently the results from some studies have limited use.

However, even where multivariate techniques have been used in a sophisticated and suitable manner, some of the complexities of the interactions of the factors measured have still not been unravelled. Perhaps the best example of this concerns the interrelationship between social groupings and ethnicity. Research has shown that although social position seems to be a major factor—probably the most important factor affecting students' experiences—the attitudes and values of individuals belonging to certain socio-economic groupings within ethnic groups often differ from those of their 'Australian' counterparts.

There are a number of possible interpretations of this finding. It may be that the measurement of socio-economic status within different ethnic groups is unreliable, as a result, perhaps, of highly educated immigrants to Australia having to take low status jobs. On the other hand it may be that the use of a socio-economic status variable to capture the complexities of interactions within different social groupings is unsuitable.

Connell et al. (1982) argued that classes in contemporary Australia are not clear cut and easily delineated, but are complex and internally-divided groupings composed into a dialectic between their own activity and its circumstances. Students may bring to school their parents' cultural capital, but it should not be assumed that this necessarily fixes their outcomes, neither should it necessarily be assumed that parents' values and attitudes harmonise into an easily described social group. Connell et al. argued that the problem was not that of choosing a Marxist definition of class as opposed to a socio-economic definition, but a matter of accepting the internal divisions and complexities within pre-defined groups.

However the differences found between ethnic groups and other Australian respondents in connection with the relationship between socio-economic status and educational attitudes may be real, and of interest. The attitudes and values of social groupings within different ethnic groups may be vastly different to one another and to those of other Australians. This difference may relate to some cultural facets or to the process of migration itself. Migrants may possess attitudes and values which differ from those of the average resident of their country of origin; one such possible difference may relate to the desire for educational or occupational mobility.

The research has not been able to unravel the complexities of the interrelationship of social class and ethnicity, and therefore it is not surprising that it has failed to unravel even more complex interrelationships such as the added effect of gender upon ethnicity and social groupings. Research suggests that this added effect is significant, but just how it impinges on life chances for different ethnic groups and different social groupings is unclear.

For the purposes of this review, the overall value of research must be judged against its capacity to answer the questions posed in Section 1: how immigrant

groups approach schooling, post-secondary education and work; how schools or other institutions respond to immigrant groups; how well immigrant Australians achieve in their educational or vocational experiences.

It has to be admitted that research in Australia has not enabled confident answers to be made to these questions. There were considerable weaknesses, gaps and contradictions in the evidence. The area of least research relates to the second of these three questions, the response to the immigrant presence, but even within the other questions there are gaps. For example, there are more data on educational participation than performance and there is little information on educational attitudes towards multicultural curricula. At post-secondary level there is in general a great shortage of information.

As an example of the paucity of evidence concerning issues of access to opportunities, the research, although describing different patterns of participation, could not distinguish whether these patterns reflected desires, abilities or certain discriminatory practices, overt or unintended.

The discussions that follow should be viewed in the light of these reservations; quite often evidence is indicative rather than conclusive.

3 HOW IMMIGRANT AUSTRALIANS APPROACH SCHOOLING

The extent to which students proceed through the educational system and perform satisfactorily is likely to depend upon a number of factors. Among these are the aspirations that students or their families have concerning education, the motivation and self-concept that students bring to their educational experiences, and the attitudes they form concerning schooling.

This section is also concerned with that aspect of disadvantage which relates to the quality and relevance of education to different groups. In attempting to link this discussion with the concept of multiculturalism, it has to be acknowledged that the review can only touch upon these issues. The review has not been able to document the full range of multicultural policies as they exist at school level, but it does provide information on how different groups may perceive the adoption of multicultural curricula and other educational policies.

3.1 Educational Aspirations

A great many research studies have provided evidence concerning the educational aspirations of immigrant groups. The most extensive and detailed research is possibly that carried out in a series of studies in Victoria (Taft, Strong and Fensham, 1971; Fensham and Taft, 1973; Taft, 1975a; Taft, 1975b). Although the data collected in these studies are somewhat dated, more recent evidence indicates that aspirational patterns have not changed greatly over time.

Table 3.1 details the findings from the 1971 Taft et al. study, which revealed a marked variety in educational aspirations for, and eventual participation in, post-secondary education across different immigrant groups. Surprisingly, perhaps, the levels of educational aspiration were much less closely related to occupational background in some national groups than others, which suggested

that high levels of aspiration were more a cultural trait than a function of occupational standing. Subsequent studies undertaken by Taft and his associates confirmed the higher aspirational levels of immigrant Australians from non-English speaking backgrounds, and confirmed the relationships between occupational backgrounds and aspirational levels found earlier. These later studies also revealed that female aspirations tended to be lower than those of the males, especially among Italian girls.

The following studies conducted have generally confirmed these findings: (Connell, Stroobant, Sinclair, Connell and Rogers, 1975; Marjoribanks, 1979; Martin and Meade, 1979; Meade, 1981; Poole, 1981; Williams, Batten, Girling-Butcher and Clancy, 1981; Meade, 1983; Poole, 1983; Ainley, Batten and Miller, 1984a). The studies also reveal that there is generally a congruence between students' and their parents' aspirational levels and parents of immigrant Australians with non-English speaking backgrounds often seem to offer more educational encouragement to their children than do other Australians. They also indicate that male students' aspirations, or the aspirations that parents of male students have for their offspring, are often higher than those for females. Patterns varied from one ethnic group to the next, and they are not easily summarised.

Table 3.1 **National Background, Occupational Background and Educational Aspirations Among Male Victorian Secondary School Students, 1968**

Birthplace of parents	Fathers in occupational categories			Students who planned to enter a tertiary institution in 1968			Students who planned to enter university in 1968 and did		
	Professional and administrative %	Own business %	Skilled and semi-skilled %	N	University %	CAE %	N	%	N
Australian Australian	35	15	15	4506	23	15	4506	64	1076
Australian Other	41	20	12	462	27	13	462	65	124
British British	40	6	28	284	24	12	284	73	59
British Other	31	38	10	32	31	6	32	80	8
N. Europe N. Europe	26	16	42	122	15	13	122	29	18
Polish Polish	12	38	31	102	37	18	102	84	27
E. Europe E. Europe	18	14	41	151	27	26	151	60	31
N. Europe E. Europe	16	16	42	50	24	18	50	33	13
Italian Italian	5	21	39	160	29	16	160	56	38
Greek Greek	3	21	30	34	26	32	34	78	8
Asian Asian	32	49	6	100	52	4	100	48	35

Source: Anderson and Vervoorn, 1983:99. Based on Taft, Strong and Fensham, 1971:41, 45, 50.

One study which presented some evidence contrary to this general pattern was conducted by Ainley, Batten and Miller (1984b). In this national study of factors affecting retentivity in 150 schools, the authors did not find that students whose parents were born in non-English speaking countries held higher aspirations than other students. The study did not disaggregate data across ethnic groups

but it may be possible that over time Australian students' educational aspirations have been slowly rising to match those of the ethnic groups, since there appears to be no evidence that recent immigration patterns should have led to lower educational aspirations for the ethnic groups. This speculation should, however, be treated with caution because in another study of retentivity in Victorian schools (Ainley et al. 1984a), aspirational levels fitted the more common pattern of findings.

Although much of the research has shown that social class did not appear to be a key predictor of educational aspirations for ethnic groups, Anderson and Vervoorn (1983) cautioned against dismissing the importance of social class. They referred to the 1973 survey carried out by the Australian Population and Immigration Council which revealed that almost one-third of immigrant Australians working in unskilled or semi-skilled occupations had overseas qualifications of some sort. However, in a discussion of the 'often excellent performance of the children of political emigrés from Eastern Europe', Smolicz and Wiseman (1971a) rejected the idea that it could be explained solely by reference to submerged middle-class influences, and referred to both the high regard in which education and 'culture' are held in Central and Eastern Europe and to what they called:

> ...'migrant drive', a type of social mobility orientation in newly arrived families without property and influence in the country of settlement but with a great desire to make good for these deficiencies in the second generation through their children's excellence in academic and professional pursuits. Although the effect of such a 'drive' would not be limited to settlers from Eastern Europe, it would, of course, be greatly magnified among the middle-class political refugees since, in their case, the children would be attempting to re-establish the family into its former social position after a period of *declassement* which almost invariably followed its arrival in Australia. (Smolicz and Wiseman, 1971:8-9)

Research has shown that as far as educational aspirations are concerned, later immigrant Australians from non-English speaking backgrounds, regardless of their social status, are not very different from those from eastern Europe and there would appear to be no reason to suppose that their drive to succeed would be in any way inferior to these earlier immigrant Australians described by Smolicz and Wiseman.

3.2 Motivation, Commitment and Self-Concept

General research, as opposed to research into immigrant groups, has indicated that motivation and commitment to future education are important predictors of educational attainment (Knight, 1977; Poole, 1978; Rosier, 1978) and that early school leavers are generally less self-confident (Everett, 1971; Connell et al., 1975). Stroobant (1978), in fact, reported that self-esteem and associated personality factors appeared to have a closer association with the rejection or appreciation of education than did ability considerations, and Partington (1984) suggested that self-concept had a greater effect on achievement than did national identity.

Research into the effects of these factors on immigrant Australians' educational experiences is scarce. What little is available suggested that students from ethnic groups might approach schooling with, or develop during it lower self-concepts than those of 'Australians' or immigrant Australians with English

speaking backgrounds. It also seemed likely that there was a complex interplay between gender and ethnicity in patterns of self-concept.

Evidence of motivation or commitment to education indicated that different eth-classes had similar patterns of commitment to school but different patterns of achievement orientations. Generally, however, parental encouragement in education for ethnic students was high.

3.3 Attitudes towards Schooling

There are three potentially important aspects relating to attitudes towards schooling which may affect educational disadvantage. First, attitudes may contribute towards decisions concerning retentivity or may affect achievement. Second, it might be argued that where students are being encouraged to remain longer at school, there is an obligation to make the schooling experience enjoyable. It is not just that the school climate is likely to affect retentivity, but also that schooling should be a satisfying experience in its own right. Third, from the point of view of immigrant groups, the educational experience is important in its capacity to maintain or ignore the cultural traditions of these groups.

3.3.1 Attitudes and Performance or Participation

Research into the association between attitudes towards schooling and educational performance or participation is sparse and conflicting. Research indicates that early school leavers have more negative attitudes towards school (Tinney, Benn and O'Neil, 1974; Behrens, 1978; Wright, Headlam, Ozolins and Fitzgerald, 1978), but Rosier (1978) also concluded that when other factors were controlled, the association between liking school and the tendency to remain at school decreased so markedly that in most of the Australian States this factor had virtually no net effect.

With respect to the effects of attitudes on performance although Bourke (1984) found few effects with respect to students' attitudes towards mathematics, or towards school in general and mathematics performance, Marjoribanks (1979) suggested that parents' attitudes towards teaching and towards the school, but not towards teachers, were associated with children's performance on word knowledge measures. Within the different eth-classes examined by Marjoribanks (an eth-class related to a combination of social and national background) it was found that the importance placed on the learning of English acted as a threshold variable affecting the relationship between attitudes and performance. For example, for Greek and southern Italian children, the effects of parents' satisfaction on children's performance became more pronounced when there was a greater press for English in the home environment, and at each satisfaction level increases in press for English were also related to sizable increases in performance. Marjoribanks also stated that although students' commitment to school did not appear to be related to performance measures, their academic adjustment to school was related in the case of certain low status eth-classes.

3.3.2 Attitudes and the Quality of Schooling

At a general level, research seems to indicate that ethnic groups were less dissatisfied with their school experience than others. For example, Connell et

al. (1975) investigated the extent to which cultural ambivalence (the mismatch between home and school values) affected the attitudes of second-generation immigrant Australians. The authors' hypothesis was that cultural ambivalence could lead to disenchantment with school, but they found no evidence for this. Although differences occurred across immigrant groups, on the whole the ethnic groups displayed favourable attitudes towards schooling (Sheppard 1978; Wold 1978; Meade 1983).

The consistency of general attitudes decreased with respect to the perceived benefits accruing from education. There was variation across groups (Connell et al., 1975; Jakubowicz and Wolf, 1980) and evidence that some ethnic groups perceived less benefit from education than did Australians (Abiuso, 1975; Connell et al., 1975).

On particular items of content of schooling or certain home/school relationships, ethnic groups were more critical than Australians (Connell et al., 1975). Among aspects of schooling criticised were the large number of subjects taught which were not liked (Connell et al., 1975), the lack of early specialisation in core subjects (Connell et al., 1975), and lack of emphasis on science (Connell et al. 1975).

In addition to this evidence, other research has indicated that many ethnic groups have a more conservative or traditional approach to schooling. They offered strong support for the present or even increased homework levels (Holdsworth, 1975; Taylor, 1978; de Ferranti, 1980; Jakubowicz and Wolf, 1980) preferred more strictness in school (Noble and Ryan, 1976; Jakubowicz and Wolf, 1980) and while accepting the value of non-traditional activities, did not wish that these activities should take priority over the traditional learning areas (Jakubowicz and Wolf 1980). Connell et al. (1975) also found that ethnic students were less concerned about increasing their own responsibilities than were other Australians. Criticisms were less often focussed on methods of teaching or teachers.

A final issue which received consistent mention in the research related to the home/school interaction. There was evidence that many ethnic groups felt isolated from the school and this was generally attributed to language problems, parental lack of confidence or inadequate school policies (Brotherhood of St Laurence, 1971; Smolicz and Wiseman, 1971b; Australia. Department of Education, 1975; Taylor, 1978; de Ferranti, 1980; Jakubowicz and Wolf, 1980; Meade, 1981).

3.3.3 Attitudes and Multiculturalism

Smolicz (1981b) argued that cultural maintenance must be studied in relation to the nature of each culture and its core values: mechanisms to preserve one culture might not necessarily be suitable for another. He held that it was the elimination of ethnic languages which represented the greatest danger to the core values of most minority cultures.

Research into these issues is complex and contradictory. On the basis of research in which Smolicz was involved, it has been argued that many immigrant Australian children never learn the art of reading and writing in their ethnic languages and stable bilingualism is rare (Smolicz and Harris, 1977; Smolicz and Lean, 1979; 1980; Smolicz, Lean and Secombe, 1980). In their study of Polish children Smolicz and Secombe (1981) found that a decline in ethnic language maintenance was not the result of a deliberate rejection of, or indifference to

Polish but was related to the circumstances in which different languages were activated and developed. They reported continuing positive attitudes to the mother tongue and a continuing desire to study it at school (Jakubowicz and Wolf, 1980; Smolicz and Lean, 1980; Smolicz, 1983).

However, Smolicz and Lean (1980) showed that a substantial number of immigrant Australians rejected ethnic language maintenance and unambiguously adopted what the authors called a 'dominant monolingualism'. Although these individuals were generally from within the British-Irish-Australian categories, a small minority of ethnic children displayed a monistic orientation, and Smolicz (1983) revealed that quite often Italian girls rejected their language heritage.

Other studies have revealed the complexity of ascertaining attitudes on language issues. Marjoribanks (1979) indicated that parental attitudes varied according to the age of the students receiving language education, and to the ethnic group or immigrant group to which they belonged. There was, in fact, some evidence that the Anglo-Celtic parents were more supportive of a bilingual approach to education for newly arrived immigrant Australians, whereas for those who had been in Australia longer the ethnic parents were more supportive of language maintenance than the Anglo-Celtic group. The Yugoslavs in the study were less concerned with language maintenance than the Greeks or Italians. Support for these findings concerning the needs of newly arrived ethnic students came from the evaluation of the Commonwealth Contingency Program designed to assist the education of Indo-Chinese refugees. The students themselves stressed the necessity to concentrate on English in the school.

More recently, Piper and Miller (1984), although only using broad classifications of ethnicity, provided very little support for the introduction of bilingual programs into the junior secondary school, although the teaching of 'foreign' and 'community' languages was seen as having some priority as well as mother-tongue maintenance and the teaching of languages of our trading partners. Ethnic parents were found to hold similar views to those from English speaking backgrounds. For example, both groups generally believed that although the teaching of languages other than English should be available in the curriculum, it should be optional, not compulsory. Both groups accorded high priority specifically to the teaching of traditional foreign languages in the curriculum and some priority to the teaching of community languages.

The majority of research concerning issues of cultural maintenance seems to have concentrated upon language issues; the little research available on other more general issues is not easy to interpret. Smolicz and Lean (1979) found very little support for the statement that 'immigrants and their children should forget their native cultures and learn to behave like Australians as soon as possible', but Marjoribanks (1979) found that most parents from English speaking and non-English speaking backgrounds believed the school should concentrate on the study of Australia or other English-speaking countries and not upon ethnic cultures.

4 IMMIGRANT AUSTRALIANS AND THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSE

In discussing factors that contribute to educational or social inequalities, a greater recognition of the role played by the school or other educational organisations

has developed. In addition, a greater awareness of the relationship between schools and social structures and subsequent reproduction of social inequalities has come about. To an extent, this is a reaction to an earlier focus of attention upon individual characteristics and the part they play in inequalities (Connell et al., 1982).

One aspect of this relationship between schools and inequalities centres upon the capacities of different social groups to fashion education arrangement such as the control over the definition, distribution and evaluation of knowledge. Apple (1979) argued that schools not only process people, they process knowledge: they are responsible for making decisions about what knowledge is considered important and to whom it should be granted. Although it would be fair to say that concern with these issues has more often been expressed in relation to the reproduction of social class inequalities, it is possible that elements of special selection and treatment could occur with respect to immigrant groups. In any case, in the context of inequalities generally, even if such a process was directed more towards social class reproduction it has important ramifications for all immigrant groups, especially those which, because of the immigration policies adopted or because of circumstances occurring within Australia, now find themselves with large proportions of individuals in the lower socio-economic status positions.

Unfortunately these issues have received more attention at a theoretical level than at an empirical level and this is particularly true with respect to the reproduction interpretation of inequality. It is not just that these issues have only recently become so important in sociological research in Australia, but that the subtlety by which the process occurs (it may not always simply be a process of allocating students to different courses, for example academic as opposed to vocational) often requires a subtlety of research methodology which has only become more acceptable in education research in recent years. It would seem that a great deal of information about these processes is being obtained from research in the ethnographic tradition, which involves lengthy field work in different settings.

4.1 School Retentivity and Performance and Post-Secondary Opportunities

A strong relationship between school retentivity, performance and qualifications and post-school educational participation has been established at a very general level (Elsworth, Day, Hurworth and Andrews, 1982; Beswick, Hayden and Schofield, 1983).

Because so few studies of the transition to post-secondary education have focussed on immigrant groups, it is generally assumed that this relationship applies equally to immigrant Australians. However, it should be noted that Beswick et al. (1983) found that parental encouragement was almost as important as examination results in the transition from secondary to tertiary education. Given the fact that parents of students from non-English speaking backgrounds have high aspirations (generally higher than those of Australians) and that their attitudes towards education are generally positive, it is possible, albeit speculative, that the relative importance of parental encouragement over examination results might be more noticeable for ethnic groups. Further evidence for such speculation is obtainable from the study by Elsworth et al. (1982), who concluded that it was factors either prior to or outside the educational experience of immigrant

Australians that were the source of their commitment to tertiary education. The authors suggested that the influence of the family or aspects of the ethnic sub-culture might be important.

4.2 Curriculum Structure and Content

Although a number of reviews of the structure of secondary schooling, its curriculum and systems of credentialling have been or are being conducted, it is difficult to assess their impact on immigrant groups. Research findings in this area are speculative rather than conclusive.

What little evidence that exists suggests that ethnic groups may undergo somewhat different experiences at school from other groups. However the research does not indicate whether or not these differences have long-term effects upon retentivity, education performance or post-school opportunities. Research also fails to reveal whether or not different ethnic groups are channelled into different types of courses while at school.

Research suggested that the process of classroom interaction may vary according to the mix of sexes and ethnic groups within the classroom (Dunkin and Doenau, 1982). Girls from non-English speaking backgrounds reviewed in one study were involved in less than 50 per cent of the number of interactions expected on the basis of their numbers in the classes. These interactions were teacher-directed and student-initiated, and although it was possible that teachers were implementing discriminatory attitudes on the basis of gender and ethnicity, it was also possible that the girls from non-English speaking backgrounds were determining their levels of participation, perhaps by adhering to sex roles acquired through cultural learnings.

Although a great deal of American research has indicated the importance of classroom interaction processes and has indicated ethnic differences in this process more research is needed in Australia.

Other research both in Australia and the United States has suggested that the expectations that teachers have for their students may be an important factor affecting the schooling process and the attention that students receive. Generally the research suggested that where teachers held low expectations of students they interacted less with them, although interestingly one study in Queensland reported the opposite tendency (Alloway, 1984). The manner in which teacher expectations or school policies may produce inequalities has been more frequently studied in connection with low status students, but not with ethnic groups (Keddie, 1971; Knight, 1974; Tinney et al., 1974; Bowles and Gintis, 1976; Williams, 1976; McGaw, Warry, Varley and Alcorn, 1977; Turney, Inglis, Sinclair and Straton, 1978), and there is some evidence that ethnicity is an additional element in this process.

Martin and Meade (1979: 7) argued:

> Preliminary analysis of this information indicates that children of low IQ, and particularly children of low IQ and low SES, are more likely than other students to find teachers indifferent or even discouraging. Once allocated to the lower streams (which may be on the basis of performance in English or language-based tests), migrant students (probably more so than others) have little chance of moving into the top streams: teachers think that they are doing their duty in trying to make such students realistic about their chances of future education and jobs ... . On the other hand,

migrant students who are defined as bright seem on our evidence, often to attract all the attention and encouragement that they want from teachers.

Other research has indicated that teachers' assessments of children ('teachability', discipline problems and 'moral acceptability') vary according to perceptions of the children's ethnicity (Gillett, 1981) and that the attitudes of trainee teachers towards different immigrant groups, while generally positive, varied according to teacher characteristics and student ethnicity (Sealey, 1980). In addition there is some evidence that potential bias against ethnic groups is not restricted to teacher behaviour but can involve discriminatory text and test material (Isaacs, 1981).

Although very little is known about the extent and variety of schools' multicultural policies and their impact on students, Moore and Rosenthal (1982) suggest that schools can develop strategies that are seen by students in favourable terms. Benefits from these policies seemed to accrue to both the ethnic students and to other students. However, certain ethnic groups did seem unaffected by school practices and this was attributed to low levels of adjustment in the case of Italian females and strong outside support systems in the case of Greek males.

4.3 Schools, Social Structures and Reproduction of Inequality

The only research in Australia which has attempted to focus upon the place that schools have within social structures and the effects of this upon inequalities has been conducted by Connell et al. (1982). Although this study was concerned with social class inequalities and not ethnic group disadvantage, it does have relevance to the situation of many immigrant Australian families.

Connell et al. acknowledged that schools could be active and influential producers of educational outcomes through teachers' strategies, streaming, cramming, curriculum content and the like, but did not believe that this led to the view that inequality could be attributed solely to deficiencies within schools. They contended that schools cannot be understood in isolation from their social context.

The research conducted by Connell et al. focussed on two specific groups of families whose social position and relationship to each other was understood, and whose relationship to the school might assist in understanding what was actually happening in schools. The groups studied were families of people doing manual or semi-manual work for wages on the one hand, and managers, businessmen and professionals on the other.

The findings of the study suggested that the patterns of relationships, that is expectations and interactions, of 'ruling-class' parents and schools differed from those of the relationships of working-class parents and schools. As a result, the social structure remained very much the same. Connell et al. were not arguing that education failed to contribute to upward social mobility but that there was the chance that it could contribute towards downward social mobility. At the extremes, the patterns of social structures altered little.

Connell et al. argued that ruling-class parents saw teachers and schools as facilities to serve their interests, and their educational backgrounds gave them the confidence to become involved in educational decision-making. Working-class parents, because of their often alienating educational experiences, lacked this confidence and saw the educational system as a complex bureaucracy.

Connell et al. acknowledged that the schools attempted to avoid reproducing inequalities and suggested that if 'reproduction' dominated it was because that

side of things had won against other tendencies and this had resulted from the historically developed structure of relationships between schools and their catchments.

5 IMMIGRANT AUSTRALIANS AND SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT

This section examines two separate measures of achievement at the levels of primary and secondary schooling: retentivity or attainment, and performance. It is acknowledged that these outcome variables are not necessarily measuring the same thing, that is, not all high-performing students would remain at school until matriculation and not all low-performing students would leave school early. However, it is argued that both measures, either independently or together, can affect later opportunities.

5.1 Educational Retentivity

The greater likelihood of students from non-English speaking backgrounds (especially from families of lower occupational status) continuing at school until matriculation has been reported in a number of studies (Tinney et al., 1974; Connell et al., 1975; Taft, 1975b; Rosier, 1978; Wright et al., 1978; Williams, Clancy, Batten and Girling-Butcher, 1980). Also, research has shown that student retentivity is higher in schools which have larger proportions of students from non-English speaking backgrounds (Ainley et al., 1984a; 1984b).

For example, Rosier (1978) examined the determinants of the decisions of 16-year-old Australian youth to remain at school or to leave. Rosier sampled students in 1970 when they were aged 14, and two years later when they were aged 16. Underlying the study was a conceptual framework based on the assumption that a young person's decision to remain at school or to leave was influenced both by a range of environments and by a set of personal characteristics. Four blocks of factors were examined which were considered to be in a temporal sequence, with later blocks being causally dependent on earlier ones. The four blocks of factors were (a) family environment factors, (b) school environment factors, (c) age 14 personal factors, and (d) age 16 personal factors.

Of particular interest to this review were the effects on the decision to terminate school of the extent to which English was the spoken home language. The analysis examined the contribution of language to the model over and above that explained by other basic family environment variables and by sex. Rosier concluded that home language made only a marginal contribution to the decision to leave although there was a tendency for those students whose home language was not English to remain at school longer. This association became stronger once the basic family environment variables and the gender factors had been controlled.

It should be stressed, however, that these general findings relate to aggregated data. There would appear to be considerable variations across different ethnic groups in terms of student retentivity (Connell et al., 1975; Martin and Meade, 1979). Martin and Meade (1979) have shown, in fact, that there was more variation in retention and performance at school from one non-English speaking ethnic group to the next than between all students of non-English speaking origin and all children of Australian or other English speaking origin. Among the ethnic groups that appeared to remain at school for shorter periods were the Lebanese, Maltese, Italians and Yugoslavs.

As well as the need to disaggregate by national background, research would indicate that patterns of retentivity also vary according to a sex by ethnicity mix (Australia. Schools Commission, 1975a; Knight, 1977). The Schools Commission (1975a:140), for example, reported:

> The generally higher aspirations of non-English speaking migrant families do not extend as strongly to females as to males, and there are some indications that Italian girls fall considerably below other groups including Australians, in their aspirations. There is no evidence that the daughters of migrant parents perform any less well than the sons, but at both 16 and 18 year-old levels in 1971, girls born in Greece, Italy and Yugoslavia were markedly more likely to have left the education system than were Australian girls or boys of similar background.

A number of studies have attempted to examine the relationship between ability and retentivity of ethnic students despite the hazards of measuring the ability of individuals whose language capacities may be limited. There was some evidence that many more immigrant Australians of above average ability left school at age 15 than was the case with other Australians, but patterns varied across ethnic groups (Connell et al., 1975). Also, research indicated that language difficulties contributed in no small way to the low IQs of some children whose mother-tongue was not English. Although low IQ students tended not to pursue their education as much as high IQ students it was suggested that academic motivation could act as a substitute for IQ, as the low IQ 'survivors' were strongly motivated to achieve. It was further reported that if anything, immigrant Australian children and their parents were more strongly achievement-motivated than their Australian counterparts (Blandy and Goldsworthy, 1975).

5.2 Educational Performance

At the primary school level, there is evidence that children with non-English speaking backgrounds performed less well at school than did other students (de Lemos, 1975; Marjoribanks, 1979; Williams et al., 1981). However Williams et al. (1981) argued that although disadvantage in word knowledge and numeracy was related to migrancy, the effects were small.

Perhaps the most sophisticated study of the relationship between family environment and the educational performances of immigrant and other primary school students was conducted by Marjoribanks (1979). He concluded that performances in mathematics, word knowledge and word comprehension were related to the different eth-classes studied. There was evidence, especially in the literacy components of the study, that Italian, Greek and Yugoslav students achieved less well than did Australians of similar backgrounds. On the basis of this study, it would seem that families from different eth-classes created different learning environments for their children—and different ones for males and females—and these environments in turn affected children's academic performance.

The study also indicated that certain other factors were important in affecting the performance of the ethnic groups. One such factor which emerged as an important determinant of the performance of Greek and Anglo-Australian lower status students was the 'press for English' (that is, the importance attached to English in the home environment). Further, it seemed that changes in value orientations, from 'collectivistic' to 'individualistic', were related to increments

in comprehension scores for southern Italian and Anglo-Australian lower status students; that the students' academic adjustment to school was related to academic performance in the case of certain lower status eth-class groups; and that family instrumental orientations, which related to parents' knowledge of children's work, praise, discussion and expectations about their work, were also related to performance in mathematics for southern Italian children.

At the secondary level, research has consistently shown that students from certain non-English speaking backgrounds perform less well than other students (cf. Connell et al., 1975; Taft, 1975a, 1975b; Hewitt, 1977; 1978; Williams et al., 1980; Dapiran, 1982). A major factor emerging in these studies was the language proficiency of students. For example, Hewitt (1977) noted that 59 per cent of 10-year-old and 43 per cent of 14-year-old immigrant Australian students (compared with 47 per cent and 28 per cent of other Australian students respectively failed to reach the 80 per cent mastery level on reading tests. The most important influence appeared to be the amount of English spoken in the home. In this study, an immigrant Australian was defined as a student who came from a family unit where at least one parent was born outside Australia and where no English, or a language in addition to English, was spoken in the home. While the lack of English affected reading mastery, some immigrant Australians were more disadvantaged than others. Students whose parents were born in countries other than northern Europe or Australia were less likely to perform well in reading, and students who themselves were born outside of Australia, irrespective of their parents' country of birth, also appeared disadvantaged.

With respect to number work, immigrant Australians' performance was more encouraging. Only 32 per cent of 10-year-old and 34 per cent of 14-year-old immigrant Australians failed to reach the 80 per cent mastery level of the numeration test, and this was much closer to the figures for Australia overall than was the performance in reading.

Among other factors emerging as important determinants of performance were the home environmental press for English (Hewitt, 1978), peer group environmental press for English (Hewitt, 1978), parental education (Dapiran, 1982) and literacy in the home (Dapiran, 1982).

The research also indicated that recent arrivals to Australia, especially refugees from Indo-China, were particularly disadvantaged (Spearritt and Colman 1983). At the primary school level, the performance in addition and subtraction of the Vietnamese students on arrival was not significantly different to that of Victorian children (the test had been normed in Victoria), but it was below the Victorian norm in multiplication and division. The Laotian and Kampuchean students were below the Victorian norms on all aspects of the test.

After six months in a program designed to help these students, it was found that at both primary and secondary level the percentages of refugees answering items correctly in a reading test was significantly lower than the average percentages of Australian students at both age levels, and significantly lower than a sub-group of the Australian sample who came from homes where little or no English was spoken. With respect to numeration tests, at the primary and secondary levels the results were the same. Also of interest with respect to the refugees was the finding that the only background factor which was consistently related to *initial* proficiency in English was whether or not a student had previously studied English.

Once the students had returned to the regular school system from the special program and had been in schools from between three and eight months, it was found that improvements in oral proficiency and essay writing proficiency were insufficient to compensate for earlier disadvantages and students were below the expected proficiency of Australians of comparable ages. The same findings occurred with respect to literacy and numeracy tests.

6 IMMIGRANT AUSTRALIANS AND POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Post-secondary education includes both higher education (universities and colleges) and Technical and Further Education (TAFE). The following discussion of the experiences of immigrant Australians in post-secondary education is structured along the same lines as the preceding three sections concerning schooling. Sub-sections cover how immigrant Australians approach education, how educational institutions respond to immigrant groups and how well immigrant Australians achieve in post-secondary education.

6.1 Immigrant Australians and their Approach to Post-Secondary Education

The research into the educational aspirations of immigrant Australians discussed in Section 3 often failed to distinguish aspirations at the secondary level and post-secondary. It did reveal that students from non-English speaking countries generally had higher educational aspirations than Australians or students from other English speaking countries. This pattern prevailed when both university and college education were considered and it was notable that the high aspirations of immigrant Australians extended to those students belonging to the lower socio-economic groups, whereas for other students high aspirational levels correlated strongly with high occupational status of their parents.

The research also revealed that different immigrant groups had different aspirations towards types of post-secondary opportunities. For example, there was an indication that those from northern and western Europe were least likely to aspire to university; those from eastern European countries other than Poland and those from Greece seemed to prefer a college education rather than a university education; those from Asia and Italy aspired to a university education. The research further indicated that immigrant Australian students were more likely to opt for study at metropolitan colleges rather than regional institutions. However, it is not possible to determine whether these patterns reflected aspects of access to institutions, personal attitudes, choices made within the limits of students' academic expectations, or other factors, perhaps related to course availability.

It should be cautioned, also, that much of the research reviewed concerning post-secondary aspirations was done in the early 1970s and it is not certain whether these patterns would still be the same.

It is also likely that the advice given to students, and their knowledge about post-secondary opportunities, would be important determinants of their educational decisions. Although research in this area is sparse it might be speculated, given the isolation from the school of some ethnic groups and their

language handicaps, that certain immigrant Australian students receive less advice from the school other than Australians.

6.2 Post-Secondary Education and its Response to Immigrant Australians

Issues of access to post-school education, which includes consideration of the availability of institutions and courses and the financial capacity of different student groups to undertake such study are relevant to this section. Also relevant to our understanding of the educational response to immigrant groups is a discussion of their own attitudes towards their experiences.

Karmel (1981; 1983) has documented the low participation rate of Australian youth, by international standards, in higher education and the sharp fall in that participation between 1974 and 1981. He argued this was unrelated to difficulties in admission since admission to most courses in most institutions had become easier. Burke and Davis (1984) noted that the Commonwealth Government's current directions for growth in higher education focus upon management, science and technology which, they argued, would be unlikely to disadvantage ethnic groups. Research into the present participation of immigrant Australians in courses or institutions, as already noted, is unable to ascertain whether patterns of participation reflect personal preferences or limited access to first choices.

Burke and Davis (1984) have examined the role of TAFE in the structure and philosophy of the education of immigrant Australians, noting in particular its increased responsibility for providing English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses. Burke and Davis described the varied responses to this increased responsibility, and argued that organisational changes have led to a reduction of some innovative programs previously run by higher education institutions. Burke and Davis also documented other problems with the new arrangements which included:

- low levels of funding for TAFE programs
- diversion of funds within TAFE to priorities imposed from outside
- difficulties in determining the extent of demand for courses and client expectations
- shortage of staff and teaching materials
- problems in allowances for course applicants.

Burke and Davis argued, however, that there was evidence, at both State and national level, that the education of immigrant Australians was being advanced within TAFE and this emphasis went beyond English programs to a more multicultural focus, including, for example, information and advice centres for ethnic communities. Patterns of provision varied from State to State and from region to region, and little data existed on the breadth and quality of provision.

Another aspect of the issue of access to institutions relates to potential financial constraints upon students. In a review of factors affecting participation by young people in tertiary education, Hayden (1982:151) commented:

> Recent patterns of movement in the financial costs and benefits of a higher education qualification provide the most compelling, though not a complete, explanation of why young people are turning away from higher education. The financial costs of obtaining a higher education qualification have increased in real terms, not so much because the living costs of

students have increased disproportionately to the rate of inflation (although this may have been the case in relation to rental accommodation and travel costs), but rather because previously valuable and reliable sources of income (such as teacher training awards, TEAS allowances, and possibly also part-time employment for full-time higher education students) have declined in value and availability since the mid-1970s. At the same time, the financial benefits accruing to having a higher education qualification appear to have declined. Data from income distribution surveys reveal a decline during the 1970s in the relative income position of graduates. Though this decline has varied in its severity according to the type of qualification concerned and the recency of graduation, and though it appears also to have been relatively more pronounced among males in the early 1970s and among females in the late 1970s, the overall downward trend has been consistent. And graduate unemployment has emerged as a relatively new phenomenon in the second half of the 1970s.

Ethnic groups, however, were *less* likely to be affected by cutbacks in allowances (Burke and Davis, 1984); problems of finance were less likely to be mentioned as a determinant of post-school educational decisions (Beswick et al., 1983), and parental encouragement to ethnic students to proceed to post-school education has remained high (Elsworth et al.,1982). As a result, it appeared that ethnic groups were more likely to proceed to post-school education than were others and that the parents of these students were more prepared to suffer economic hardship than were other parents.

No research was available concerning the attitudes that immigrant Australians developed during their post-secondary education and therefore it is not possible to describe their views upon the educational response to their presence.

6.3 Immigrant Australians and Post-Secondary Educational Achievement

This section focusses more upon educational participation than on education performance. The little research that does exist suggests that immigrant groups in post-secondary education perform no worse than Australians (Fensham and Taft, 1973; Horne, 1974; Beswick et al., 1983).

6.3.1 Immigrant Australians and Higher Education

With respect to educational participation or attainment, the data are complex and confusing. The confusion in part relates to the period of time when the data were collected, and in part to the samples surveyed or studied.

Burke and Davis (1984) have shown that although on average ethnic students were more likely to have completed a degree than were other students, members of certain ethnic groups (Yugoslavs, Lebanese, Turks, Vietnamese and Italian females) were far less likely to have done so. In addition, research reviewed by Anderson and Vervoorn (1983) indicated that up to the mid-1970s, the differences between ethnic groups and others in terms of educational participation were nowhere near as large as differences in aspirations. Also, some of the early studies suggested that ethnic groups were more likely to end up in colleges than universities and it was speculated that, given the high aspirations of ethnic students, many may have been forced to settle for a college place because their matriculation results had not been high enough to win a university place (Fensham and Taft, 1973).

Details of the national backgrounds of students attending the University of Melbourne (Price and Pyne, 1976) indicated that relative to the Victorian population aged 15-19 years, the immigrant groups under-represented were those from English speaking backgrounds, including Australia, those from Holland, Italy, Yugoslavia, Greece, Malta and Turkey. The countries significantly over-represented were Germany, Latvia and Lithuania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Russia and Asia. Between 1970 and 1978, on the other hand, the ethnic groups that contributed most towards increased participation were the Asians, Italians, Greeks and Yugoslavs.

However, more recent data, and in particular data predominantly concerned with second generation immigrant Australians, provides a somewhat different picture. Table 6.1 presents recent unpublished information from the ACER longitudinal *Youth in Transition* study. The table compares the educational participation rates of students from three different categories of ethnic origin. Although the study was unable to disaggregate individual national origins, the findings clearly indicate that young people with non-English speaking backgrounds were far more likely to be in full-time study than those from other backgrounds. There was little difference between the participation rates of those with fathers born in Australia and those with fathers born overseas in other English speaking countries. There was a greater tendency for students from non-English speaking backgrounds to be enrolled full-time in colleges or universities compared with other students, while on the other hand, students from non-English speaking backgrounds were, compared with other students, less likely to be enrolled in part-time study (Maddox 1970).

Support for the finding that ethnic groups were, on average, more likely to participate in higher education is available from other studies (Anderson, Boven, Fensham and Powell, 1978; Elsworth et al., 1982). Elsworth et al. (1982) concluded that the two immigrant Australian groups in their study (students with fathers born in non-English speaking countries and students with fathers born in English speaking countries other than Australia) were both less likely to turn down offers of tertiary places. In this study, ethnicity had the second most important direct effect on the decision to accept or reject tertiary places, with gender having the most important effect.

The authors also examined the interaction between socio-economic status and ethnicity. It was found that all things being equal, the offspring of 'English' immigrant fathers were less likely than other Australians to refuse places, and that the children of 'non-English' immigrant Australians were significantly less likely to refuse places. However, the authors argued that the interaction between socio-economic status, ethnicity and the propensity to turn down offers was strong. Within the 'non-English' group, status differences had far less effect on the decision to turn down offers than was the case for the other groups. The effect of socio-economic status for the 'English' group was the strongest. The authors concluded:

These findings are consistent with previous research which has suggested that the children of immigrants from continental Europe are better represented in higher education than would be predicted from their representation in the general population. (Elsworth et al., 1982:78)

Table 6.1 **Education Participation of a Sample of Young People Classified by Fathers' Birthplace, 1978-1982**[a]

Respondents' age	1978			1979			1980			1981			1982		
	17 years			18 years			19 years			20 years			21 years		
	Fathers' birthplace			Fathers' birthplace			Fathers' birthplace			Fathers' birthplace			Fathers' birthplace		
	A	E	NE	A	E	NE	A	E	NE	A	E	NE	A	E	NE
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Full-time Study—															
Secondary school	30	31	47	9	9	17	1	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
University	1	1	1	6	7	8	7	6	13	6	8	12	5	4	9
College of Advanced Education	-	-	-	5	7	5	6	7	7	7	5	8	5	3	7
TAFE[b]	3	1	3	3	3	4	1	3	2	1	2	-	-	1	-
nec[c]	2	1	3	2	2	3	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Part-time Study—															
Full-time employment	12	14	7	22	23	13	26	26	20	20	21	23	16	20	17
Part-time employment	-	-	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	-	
No employment	1	1	-	1	1	2	3	2	3	1	2	1	1	2	3
Not in education	52	51	39	51	48	47	55	52	51	65	60	55	70	70	63
Total numbers	2403	360	529	2392	361	535	2446	362	525	2169	303	475	1897	256	391

Source: Unpublished material from the ACER Youth in Transition study.

Notes: a A=Australian-born, E=born overseas in an English-speaking country, and NE=born overseas in a non-English-speaking country.

b TAFE—Technical and Further Education.

c nec—not elsewhere classified.

The study by Anderson et al. (1978) also provided information on the interaction between socio-economic status and participation in higher education. Details of this interaction are presented in Table 6.2. Students of non-English speaking origin beginning undergraduate courses at Australian higher education institutions in 1976 were much more likely to have a father who was a manual worker than were other Australian students. Table 6.2 also reveals that students with immigrant origins were far less likely to attend rural colleges and far more likely to attend universities and metropolitan colleges than other Australians. This preference for metropolitan study might reflect immigrant urban settlement practices, possibly in conjunction with an unwillingness by immigrant Australians to leave home to study. Anderson et al. also revealed that participation rates varied according to the institution faculty. In the universities, education, law and medicine were more likely to attract other Australians while commerce and engineering attracted immigrant Australians.

Table 6.2 **Father's Occupational Background and Country of Birth of Commencing Undergraduate Students in Australia, 1976**

Father's country of birth	Father's occupation: Professional %	Other %	Manual %	Not stated %	Total (%)	Total (N)
Universities						
Australia	30.9	45.7	15.7	7.7	100	3351
UK, Eire, NZ	30.9	36.2	23.9	9.0	100	699
Europe	15.1	42.3	35.1	7.5	100	629
Asia	25.3	57.0	6.8	10.8	100	249
Metropolitan colleges						
Australia	21.6	52.1	18.8	7.5	100	2311
UK, Eire, NZ	21.4	42.6	28.1	8.2	100	462
Europe	11.2	31.9	47.7	9.0	100	429
Asia	20.7	57.8	13.3	8.2	100	135
Country colleges						
Australia	16.4	53.0	20.6	9.9	100	1340
UK, Eire, NZ	24.6	43.3	21.6	10.4	100	134
Europe	12.9	38.8	38.8	9.5	100	85
Asia	50.0	16.6	23.8	5.6	100	18

Source: Anderson, Boven, Fensham and Powell, 1978:98.

Note: The three occupational categories represent a condensed version of a 10-category classification. The 'other' category includes clerks, shop-keepers and employers.

In attempting to resolve the anomalies reported in these different studies, Burke and Davis commented that in the late 1970s and early 1980s, which were relevant to the *Youth in Transition* study, access to higher education was relatively easy compared with the 1960s and early 1970s. It is possible, then, that the ethnic students in *Youth in Transition* were more easily able to realise their aspirations. Burke and Davis argued that since 1982 demand for full-time places in higher education has revived strongly and this pattern is likely to continue; demand for places will exceed supply and as a result those with marginal examination performances might feel the effects of reduced places more severely. Anderson and Vervoorn's review of research indicated that ethnic students were more likely to obtain marginal results.

Table 6.3 **Ethnic Backgrounds of TAFE Students**

	Born in Australia %	Born in other English speaking countries %	Born in non-English speaking countries %	Number %
Students				
Males	82.0	9.0	9.0	313 700
Females	82.8	10.5	6.7	159 200
All students	82.3	9.5	8.2	472 900
Fathers of students				
Male students	69.1	15.1	15.8	
Female students	71.6	17.6	10.8	
All students	69.9	15.9	14.2	
Mothers of students				
Male students	72.2	12.8	15.0	
Female students	74.2	16.0	9.8	
All students	72.9	13.8	13.3	

Source: Commonwealth Department of Education, 1978:9,10.

Note: Percentages are derived from a sample of the total TAFE Population.

6.3.2 Immigrant Australians and TAFE

In connection with TAFE, Burke and Davis (1984) commented upon the persistent want of statistical data and the lack of research. Some evidence concerning TAFE enrolments is available from the 1975 Commonwealth Department of Education survey of students, which examined the claim that TAFE attracted a disproportionately high percentage of immigrant Australians. As can be seen from the figures in Table 6.3, the vast majority of students appeared to be of Anglo-Saxon origin with only 8 per cent born in non-English speaking countries compared with an estimated 16 per cent of such persons aged 15 to 59 years in the Census. The figures for parents of students did not show as much Anglo-Saxon dominance, but there was still no evidence that immigrant Australians were over-represented. In fact, it would seem that they were slightly under-represented.

Other data on TAFE enrolments analysed by Burke and Davis (1984) supported the view that those students of non-English speaking backgrounds were under-represented in TAFE, and in particular were under-represented in trade courses. The authors attributed this to a number of possible factors:

- the usual requirement for persons entering apprenticeships to have entered the country at least by the age of 16
- the inclusion in several apprenticeship selection processes of a test on word comprehension
- factors affecting personal contacts between families and employers
- higher aspirations of ethnic families

Burke and Davis noted regional disparities in the provision of TAFE facilities but the data did not enable an estimation of whether TAFE was providing an efficient and equitable pattern of distribution. Also, the low participation of ethnic students in TAFE generally could not necessarily be seen to represent an inequity as it could not be established whether patterns of participation reflected preferences of students or issues of access.

7 IMMIGRANT AUSTRALIANS AND THE TRANSITION TO WORK

This section does not seek to review all the literature on immigrant Australians in the workforce but concentrates on the relationship between educational experiences and the transition to work. It is concerned with two general areas:

- how immigrant Australians approach the transition to work, that is their aspirations, attitudes and knowledge of opportunities
- how well the educational attainments or achievements of immigrant Australians translate into vocational outcomes

7.1 Immigrant Australians and their Approach to Work

Research into the vocational aspirations of immigrant groups indicates that these are quite similar to their educational aspirations. For example, males from non-English speaking backgrounds aspired to higher occupational levels than

other Australians, while there were similar levels of aspiration for the females of these two groups (Taft, 1975b; Poole, 1981a; Meade, 1983). Research also revealed considerable variations across ethnic groups and across the sexes. Generally, the high aspirations of the ethnic groups extended through all socio-economic groupings.

In connection with attitudes towards work, research has generally focussed on attitudes to specific working conditions as opposed to work as an institution, and this research has not singled out the attitudes of immigrant groups. However, in research into the experiences of Turks and Lebanese (Young, Cox and Daly, 1983), no evidence of widespread lack of motivation in seeking jobs was found, but there was often extreme disappointment and frustration among the Turks and Lebanese in not being able to get work or in getting work in an unpleasant environment. There was evidence that Greek and Italian males placed greater importance on being employed in defining themselves as people and in defining their place in society than did Anglo-Australian males. Although females as a group saw employment as being less important than males, Italian females expressed the most willingness to pursue a wide range of jobs. The Greeks and Italians also seemed to place more importance on the type of job held than did Australians.

Research into the career advice that immigrant Australians have received indicated that the ethnic groups may have received less advice from schools and other sources than other groups, and they may have been more dependent upon their parents than other groups (Young et al., 1980; Meade, 1981; Young et al., 1983). Listed among the reasons for these disadvantages were language difficulties, lack of contacts, and isolation of ethnic communities from the school. Female ethnic students appeared to suffer added disadvantages in their access to advice and information.

7.2 Immigrant Australians and Vocational Attainment

The research showed the importance of educational achievement with respect to later vocational attainments (Broom, Jones, McDonnell and Williams, 1980) and with respect to the chance of unemployment (Australia. Department of Education, 1976; Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1980). Research into immigrant groups confirmed the importance of education as a predictor of future opportunities (Broom et al., 1980).

On the other hand, it was not easy to summarise and clarify the research comparing immigrant Australians and other Australians on the extent to which they were successful in converting educational achievement into vocational attainment. In fact, contradictory results have emerged depending upon whether the samples are young students moving from the Australian education system into the work force or whether cross-sectional studies of all workers are analysed.

Table 7.1 presents recent unpublished data from the ACER *Youth in Transition* study. There is an indication from these data that as those respondents whose parents were born in non-English speaking countries move from education into the labour force they are more likely to make up similar percentages in professional and white-collar work as those whose parents were born in English speaking countries or in Australia. On the other hand they were also likely to form a slightly larger percentage of the unskilled and semi-skilled categories. It is interesting that, although the unemployment rate of immigrant Australians

from non-English speaking backgrounds was a little higher than that of others when their participation in full-time education was also higher (at age 19 years, for example), the unemployment rate of the 21-year-old workers showed no such disadvantage.

Table 7.1 **Labour Force Participation of a Sample of Young People Classified by Fathers' Birthplace, 1978-1982**[a]

Respondents' age	1978			1879			1980			1981			1982		
	17 years			18 years			19 years			20 years			21 years		
	Fathers' birthplace			Fathers' birthplace			Fathers' birthplace			Fathers' birthplace			Fathers' birthplace		
	A	E	NE	A	E	NE	A	E	NE	A	E	NE	A	E	NE
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Full-time Work	1	-	-	4	3	2	8	7	6	7	6	5	10	13	11
Professional															
Managerial	-	-	1	1	1	-	1	1	2	3	2	2	3	3	3
White collar	13	13	11	20	21	19	23	24	20	23	29	27	23	22	24
Apprenticeship	8	10	3	10	12	6	10	9	7	7	5	6	2	3	3
Skilled	5	5	3	4	3	4	4	7	3	8	7	5	10	13	6
Semi-skilled	10	8	6	11	8	9	9	6	9	11	11	12	11	8	13
Unskilled	7	7	6	9	11	8	11	12	9	11	11	13	10	10	12
nec[b]	3	1	2	4	4	4	4	3	5	-	1	1	1	-	2
Part-time Work	8	11	11	4	5	5	3	6	3	6	6	6	4	2	5
Full-time study															
Part-time study	-	-	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	-
No study	4	5	2	4	2	3	4	4	4	5	4	2	6	7	2
Unemployed	-	-	-	4	4	5	5	5	5	6	3	4	7	6	5
Not in labour force	42	40	57	25	24	36	17	15	27	12	13	20	12	13	15
Total numbers	2403	360	529	2392	361	535	2446	362	525	2169	303	475	1897	256	391

Source: Unpublished material from the ACER Youth in Transition study.

Notes: a A=Australian-born, E=born overseas in an English-speaking country, and NE=born overseas in a non-English speaking country.

b nec—not elsewhere classified.

The *Youth in Transition* data presented in Table 7.1, however, used only aggregated information on national background and made no control for socio-economic background.

Other studies which failed to distinguish adult from young workers have provided a different picture. For example, on the basis of a 1973 survey of male workers in Australia, Broom et al. (1980) examined the process of status attainment for three groups defined broadly by birthplace and mother-tongue: respondents born in Australia, respondents born in another English speaking country and respondents born in a country where the language is not English. The authors found that both immigrant Australian groups were significantly less successful in converting years of basic education into first job status than the Australian-born group. All things being equal, Australian-born respondents converted one year of basic education into 26 points of first job status points for each year, and respondents from non-English speaking nations gained only 8 status points for each year of their basic education. As a great proportion of the foreign-born group started work overseas, it was argued that the varying influence of basic education on first job status represented a complex mix of social processes not simply or even primarily discrimination by Australian employers. It was also found that:

- Current job status for the group born in a non-English speaking country was less strongly tied to first job suggesting that migration was much more of a disruption to their careers. Such an interpretation, Broom et al. argued, fitted the findings of the Australian Population and Immigration Council (1976) about the importance of language skills in job placement and the greater difficulty that immigrant Australians had in maintaining their occupational careers because their qualifications were less likely to be recognised in Australia.
- The two immigrant Australian groups had lower average current occupational status and income than the Australian-born group. However, the findings indicated that to the extent discrimination occurred it did not affect income as much as the range of jobs immigrant Australians were able to enter.

The findings from the Broom et al. study highlighted the importance of educational achievement on career beginnings. The education experience was, however, shown to be affected by ethnicity and other social origins. There variables, however, did not continue to directly affect later status; in other words, ascribed benefits or handicaps persisted but they did not continually register fresh credits or debits on the attainment balance sheet.

In studies of Turkish and Lebanese youth (Young et al., 1980) and of Greek and Italian youth (Young et al., 1983), added complexities emerged. The authors in the first of these studies speculated that increased retentivity may have the effect of *increasing* unemployment prospects for immigrant Australians if they became less willing to undertake the low status jobs in which they were found to be engaged in that study. It emerged from both the Census and survey data that although an increased level of schooling raised the probability of gaining a reasonable job, the improvement was relatively less among the Turkish youth. Also, whereas a better knowledge of English helped in gaining a non-factory or non-labouring job, it had rather less effect on the level of unemployment.

Results from the second study also revealed differences across ethnic groups. It seemed that the Greeks in the sample, with or without the Leaving Certificate, were more likely to remain unemployed than were other Australians in similar situations. Italians, on the other hand, seemed to cope as well as other Australians if they had attained the necessary qualifications. The authors considered that this difference might have been a result of the higher proportion of overseas-born respondents among the Greeks. It seemed also that Greek males were more determined to obtain a suitable job rather than any job.

Although Census data analysed in this study indicated parity between the occupation distributions of employed second generation Greeks and Italians and that of other Australian employed persons, it seemed that to achieve this parity the Greeks and Italians needed to stay at school longer, experience more unemployment and make more effort by changing jobs.

A considerable number of other studies exist that are concerned with immigrant Australians in the workforce. Although these studies do not attempt to estimate the effects of education on employment with respect to first and later generation immigrant Australians, they indicated that immigrant Australians from non-English speaking countries (either on average or disaggregated to certain groups), were more likely to suffer unemployment (Strucker and Sheehan, 1981; Miller, 1982; Victorian Ethnic Affairs Commission, 1983a; 1983b; 1984b), were more likely to occupy low status positions (Miller, 1982), and were more likely to have been adversely affected by structural changes in the economy (Storer, 1979; Stricker and Sheehan, 1981; Bonnell and Dixon,1983; Kriegler and Sloan,

1984). Certain groups, such as females from some national backgrounds and new settlers, suffered severe disadvantages (Williams, 1979; Fisher, 1982; Victorian Ethnic Affairs Commission, 1983c; Alcorso, 1984; Inglis and Stromback 1984).

On the other hand, this information indicated that a number of ethnic groups had higher levels of labour force participation compared with other Australians (Miller 1982; Inglis and Stromback, 1984); that income differentials between immigrant Australians and other Australians were small (Miller, 1982); and that differences between the two groups on various factors related to work narrowed in relation to the period of residence of the immigrant Australians (Young et al., 1983; Inglis and Stromback, 1984).

8 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This paper has sought to examine the question of whether immigrant Australians are disadvantaged in their educational experiences and in the benefits they receive from education.

The introduction to the paper elaborated an extended concept of educational disadvantage. This concept drew upon implications from the more general debate concerning equality and equity in education, and the implications of the changing political attitudes towards immigrant groups, in particular the concept of multiculturalism.

Before commenting upon upon the question of disadvantage it is worthwhile recapping the general usefulness of the research into immigrant Australians and their educational experiences. It will be remembered that this review sought to answer three very general questions:

- how immigrant Australians approach schooling, post-secondary education and work
- how schools or other institutions respond to immigrant groups
- how well immigrant Australians achieve in their educational or vocational experiences

Research has not enabled confident answers to be made to these questions and in particular there is a great shortage of information concerning the response to immigrant Australians. For example, little is known about whether immigrant Australians are channelled into certain courses at school, or whether their post-secondary participation patterns reflect choices or constraints. In fact at the post-secondary level there is a great shortage of information on many issues.

At a general level there is a lack of disaggregated data on immigrant Australians (much research uses broad classifications) and there is a lack of longitudinal data showing changes from one generation to the next (research is often focussed upon certain times and it is not always clear whether patterns would have changed).

There can be no doubt that there is a need for further research and documentation in these areas. Another area which requires further work is an estimation of the importance of social structure as a determining variable on the life chances of immigrant Australians, in line with the increasing attention being given to this factor in the debate concerning school and the reproduction of social inequalities. It is likely that much of this research would require the collection of ethnographic data.

With these reservations in mind, the following discussion attempts to integrate research findings in an attempt to answer the question: are immigrant Australians disadvantaged in their educational experiences and vocational attainments?

8.1 Immigrant Australians and Disadvantage

Although at the levels of primary and secondary schooling there appears to be some indication that ethnic groups approach their schooling somewhat differently and receive somewhat different experiences from those of other Australians, representing perhaps a complex interplay between gender, class and ethnicity, it would be impossible to conclude from the research evidence that these circumstances persist into large educational inequalities. Although the ethnic groups seemed to have slightly lower performances at primary and secondary school (mainly, it would seem, because of language difficulties), in terms of retentivity and post-secondary educational participation and performance ethnic students were on average highly successful in translating their (and their parents') positive attitudes towards education into satisfactory outcomes. In fact, recent evidence would suggest that the ethnic groups on average were more likely to proceed to higher education institutions. They were, however, less likely to proceed to TAFE institutions. It was suggested that financial difficulties affected the participation of non-ethnic Australians in post-secondary education, but this was not a problem for ethnic groups who have strong family support structures.

It should perhaps be mentioned that if access to higher education becomes more difficult, which is likely, the lower performances of some of the ethnic groups may lead to a future drop in their participation in universities and colleges of advanced education.

With respect to research into the attitudes of immigrant Australian students or parents towards multicultural education policies, the evidence pointed to the necessity, acknowledged by Jayasuriya (1984), of thinking differently about the needs of first and later generation immigrant Australians. However, while Jayasuriya saw multiculturalism being used to meet the needs of *new* arrivals, research evidence indicated that it was not the new arrivals who saw the need for multicultural aspects in the curriculum. They were more concerned with what might be called survival skills, such as English proficiency, and it was *later* generation immigrant Australians who argued for more multicultural aspects to curricula including language maintenance. It would seem that these later generation immigrant Australians, at least those from some ethnic groups, were acknowledging that they had neglected much of their cultural heritage in the process of adapting to the demands of Australian society. They believed that it was the responsibility of the Australian education system, at least in part, to remedy this neglect.

Just as it was necessary to separate first and later generation immigrant Australians, it was difficult to generalise across ethnic groups with respect to aspects of multiculturalism. For example, the extent to which different groups saw language as a core cultural value, and the extend to which ethnic tenacity prevailed, varied greatly. It would not be possible, on the basis of research evidence, to feel confident about devising multicultural educational policies which would be acceptable to the different ethnic groups and to other Australians.

At the vocational level, the disparity between the findings related to young immigrant Australians and those related to all immigrant Australian workers has already been noted. Just how should these findings be interpreted and what do they imply for the long-term life chances of immigrant Australians? There can be no doubt that this research evidence provided ammunition for those who wish to argue that immigrant Australians are disadvantaged in their life chances as well as for those who wish to speculate that this disadvantage is likely to diminish with time. Professor Jayasuriya (1984) expressed concern about the interpretation of this evidence. He argued that the worsening economic position of ethnic minorities, and the nature and extent of the inequalities they suffer may, for political and ideological reasons, be distorted. He contended that evidence of 'instances of individual mobility' as documented in some studies does not substantiate changes in class position. Of these instances of mobility, he argued:

> They are status changes and occupational or income shifts which often indicate horizontal rather than vertical mobility. It is misleading to suggest that the data in this area substantiates an extensive degree of lower class upward mobility, particularly in relation to ethnic minorities. (Jayasuriya 1984:11)

Without entering into a debate on how many cases of 'individual mobility' are needed to represent an extensive degree of lower class upward mobility in Australian society, the interesting point in this quote by Professor Jayasuriya is his concern with changes in class position. It is just this interrelationship between ethnicity and social class, as well as their interaction with gender, which is the key to an interpretation of ethnic disadvantage.

Evidence on the occupational attainments of adult immigrant Australians has revealed considerable disadvantage both in terms of status and unemployment. But to what extent is this the result of factors inherent in the ethnicity of these groups? Even though determining the answer to this question will not suddenly eliminate disadvantage, it is more than a game of semantics because it is likely that policies would be tied to causes. Data from the Population Division of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (United Nations, 1982) concerning the occupational skills of male settlers in Australia revealed quite clearly that the great majority of immigrants from non-English speaking countries were far more likely to be unskilled than was the case with other Australians in the workforce. Although this tendency was stronger in early years it was still noticeable for the period 1976-1978. Although one may question immigration policies that seem to limit the life chances of large groups, it should come as no surprise to find that these immigrant Australians are more likely to occupy the lower status positions in Australian society. And because of their concentration in certain industries they are more likely to be subject to structural changes in the economy.

I am not trying to argue here that the research evidence is able to determine that no disadvantage specific to ethnic groups exists, because the evidence does not enable such an assessment. No doubt where social class disadvantage is compounded with other cultural or gender disadvantages, the position of these individuals would become intolerable by any reasonable standards. However, research tells us very little about cultural disadvantage; rather it hints at social class disadvantage. The extent to which this will persist or diminish over time depends on the level of skills of future immigrants, and whether the young immigrant Australians moving into the workforce with what seems to be reasonable success at the present will continue to have this success.

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